*[Translation]*

**Increase in Rate of Gas Commission**

1596. SHRI GOVINDRAO NIKAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether All India LPG Distributors Organisation has demanded increase in the rate of gas commission;

(b) if so, the present rate thereof and the rate of commission demanded by the said organisation;

(c) whether the Government have taken any decision in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof ; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The present rate of commission is Rs. 5.70 per cylinder of 4.2 kg. The Association has asked for a standing formula for fixing their commission base on various factors.

(c) to (e). The matter is under consideration of the Government along with the recommendations of the Oil Price Review Committee.

**Production of Species**

1597. SHRI GOVINDRAO NIKAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether production of species in the country is decreasing;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for increasing the production of species?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b). The production of Spices that stood at 5.825 Lakh tonnes by the end of 1984-85 increased to 19.603 lakh tonnes by the end of Seventh Plan (1989-90). The expected production by the end of 1991-92 is 20.77 lakh tonnes.

(c) Government of India is implementing a Central Sector Integrated Programme for Development of Spices during 1991-92 with an outlay of Rs. 15.00 crores. The measures being adopted under the Scheme for increasing production of spices are:

i) Production and distribution of improved high yeilding planting material of pepper, clove and nutmeg;

ii) Production of nucleous planting material/foundation seed of pepper, ginger, turmeric, chillies and minorspices,

iii) Distribution of input-kits for pepper and minikits for minor spices;

iv) Supply of plant protection sprayers for pepper;

v) Rehabilitation of old pepper gardens;

vi) Laying out pepper demonstration plots;

vii) Establishment of demonstration-cum-progeny gardens for spices in North Eastern region including West Bengal ; and

viii) Training of farmers on farm processing of spices.

It is proposed to continue the Central

Sector Integrated Programme for Development of Spices during 1992-93 with increased financial out lays.

**Oil Drilling in Himachal Pradesh**

1598. PROF. PREM DHUMAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Q.No. 1969 on 8th January, 1991 and state:

(a) whether Oil drilling work has since been started in Changar-Talai in Himachal Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the progress made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) Yes, Sir, on 19.3.1991.

(b) Till 27.2.1992 well Changar-Talai- 1 had been drilled upto a depth of 3308 metres.

[*English*]

**Increase in Quota of Kerosene to Kerala and Karnataka**

1599. SHRI KODIKKUNIL SURESH:
SHRI RAM CHANDRA VEERAPPA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Governments of Kerala and Karnataka have approached the Union Government to increase the quota of Kerosene; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Requests, whenever received, are considered and decisions taken keeping in view various factors, including products availability, natural clamities etc.

[*Translation*]

**Increase in Income limit for Post-Matric Scholarship**

1600. SHRI ARVIND NETAM: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have recieved any proposal from the Government of Madhya Pradesh for increasing the income limit of the parents/guardians for eligibility to grant post-matric scholarship to chidren and to link the income limit with the price index under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme; and

(b) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The matter is under consideration.

[*English*]

**Police Verification for Passport Seekers**

1601. SHRIMATI DIL KUMARI BHANDARI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to scrap the existing practice of Police Verification for passport seekers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) No, Sir.